NEWPORT BAY CONSERVANCY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
MINUTES
Wednesday, July 23, 2025, 5:36 PM, In Person and **ZOOM**

Attending:
President – Bryan Tsu
Board Members – Diane Daruty, Stacey Tutt, Bettina Eastman, Julie Powers, Mario Cuevas, Susie Onate, McKenna Wegner, Peter Bryant, Lori Metherate, and Yugina Yun
Staff and guests - Heather Cieslak
OC Parks – Molly Waldram

5:36 Call to order/roll call: Julie

Approval of Minutes:

None, as the June minutes were approved via email.

1. **Operations Report: Heather**

   The Operations Report was provided (see attached).

2. **Treasurer's Report: Julie**

   The Finance Committee Report was provided (see attached).

   Julie recommended that the large donation of $100k be invested in US Government-Backed Short Term Securities in E-Trade instead of incorporating it into the current budget.

   Julie moved; Stacey seconded; Unanimously approved

3. **Board Development: Stacey**

   The Board Development Committee Report was provided (see attached).

   Stacey recommended Maureen Flanagan (an NBC volunteer for 15 years, a Naturalist, and Managing Director at J.P. Morgan Wealth Management) for the open Board seat.

   Stacey motioned; Mario seconded; Unanimously approved

4. **Restoration Committee: Yugina**

   The Restoration Committee Report was provided (see attached).

   Yugina recommended we accept the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) grant for $3.2m in support of Big Canyon Phase 3. We are in a strong position to receive the grant should we be

available to go to Sacramento to accept it in person. Yugina and Heather will go to Sacramento on August 28, 2025. The actual construction bid for Big Canyon Phase 3 is about $5.2 or $5.4m that will be funded by the WCB grant of $3.2m, the Ocean Protection Council grant of $2.6, and the California Costal Conversancy grant of $1.6m. Excess grant funds will be used for monitoring and maintenance for 5 years, including internal staff time to monitor, maintain and report on the project for 5 years, with the small research grant from Cal State Long Beach.

Yugina moved; Stacey seconded; Unanimously approved

Julie recommended applying for the Youth Community Access (YCA) grant from the State of California, Supporting Watershed With Inclusive Mentorship (SWWIM). The grant enables us to hire interns from groups that are underrepresented in marine settings, like our local colleges, to design and lead programs that are targeted at late middle school-early high school age youths. In order to make it to Phase 3 of the selection process, we need to show our Board is willing to comply with the State regulations and accept the funds. The program is for 4 years for $500k, the majority of which will be used to hire 4 interns a year (a total of 16 interns) to go through our Naturalist training to lead programs and subsidize some internal staff time to run the Naturalist training. It also provides for up to 6 buses each year to transfer youth participants (a total of 1,440 youths) from their school to the Bay to participate.

Julie moved; Stacey seconded; Unanimously approved

Diane recommended hosting the Spirit Run (Adult/Youth 5k and Adult/Youth mile) and the NBC Half Marathon in mid-late October or mid-November 2026 (see attached proposal and preliminary notes). She has had preliminary discussions with the City of Newport Beach and Council Members and they are open to this. The Spirit Run is usually held in Fashion Island, but with future construction scheduled around Fashion Island, it has to move anyway. The event would include a 5K component and children's races ranging from a quarter mile to one mile, with a suggested cap of 1,500 participants. Newport noted that the course would be popular with runners and would require minimal street closures, making it appealing to the city. Diane discussed the registration fees and a proposal on how the revenue and expenses can be shared between the parties involved. This is a good opportunity to promote NBC, the work that it does and raise money to support its cause. The Board needs to evaluate how to minimize the environmental impact of having the run at NBC and ensure it aligns with its mission. The Board will submit concerns, questions, and suggestions about the proposed event and create a working committee at the September Board Meeting to address them.

5. **<u>Fundraising Committee</u>: Bryan**

Yugina, Diane, and Bettina provided a detailed overview of the event's progress, including ticket sales, logistics, promotional efforts and donations for the auction. Key updates included the addition of a jazz musician, confirmed catering, and ongoing efforts to secure high-value auction items and local sponsorships.

6. **<u>Education/DEI Committee</u>: Mario**

The Education Committee Report will be provided at the next meeting.

7. <u>Research and Advocacy Committee</u>: Peter

The Research Committee Report will be provided at the next meeting.

<u>8. Community Outreach Committee</u>: Bettina

The Community Outreach Committee Report will be provided at the next meeting.

Hillary highlighted the contributions of David Banuelas, a former volunteer and intern, to ongoing research and grant applications for NBC.

7:18: Adjournment: Bettina moved, Hillary seconded.

Respectfully submitted,
Susie Onate
Secretary